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EXAMINER	
CORRIELUS, JEAN M	
ART UNIT	**PAPER NUMBER**
2172	26

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/833,069	Applicant(s) GRUENWALD, BJORN J.	
	Examiner Jean M Corrielus	Art Unit 2172	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *12 April 2004*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-20 and 28-60* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☒ Claim(s) *28-38* is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-20 and 39-60* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. This office action is in response to the Request for Continued Examination filed April 12, 2004, in which claims 1-20 and 28-60 are presented for examination.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments filed April 12, 2004 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant asserted that the combination of Miller and Rennison does not teach or suggest building a context including said occurrence (from one of said plurality of descendant groups) and said related data (from said at least one predecessor group. The examiner disagrees with the precedent assertion. It is important to note that the assertion that applicant is relied upon is not described in either independent and dependent claims. There is no mentioned of building a context including said occurrence ***(from one of said plurality of descendant groups)*** and said related data ***(from said at least one predecessor group)*** in the claims. Applicant is advised to amend the claims by incorporating the abovementioned limitations.

3. Applicant also asserted that Rennison apparently recognizes two types of relationships whereas, the invention of claim 1 specifies a third type of relationship not taught or suggested by Rennison. In response, the examiner disagrees with the precedent assertion. There is no mentioned of a third type relationship in the claims. The applicants always have the opportunity to amend the claims during prosecution and broad interpretation by the Examiner reduces the possibility that the claim, once issued, will be interpreted more broadly than is justified. In re Prater 162 USPQ 541, 550-51 (CCPA 1969).

Information Disclosure Statement

4. The information disclosure statement filed 31 October 2002 (paper no.12), 25 November 2002 (paper no.13) and 23 April 2003 (paper no.15) complies with the provisions of M.E.P.. ' 609. It has been placed in the application file, the information referred to therein has been considered as to the merits.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. ' 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1-20 and 39-60 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Miller et al. (hereinafter "Miller") U S Patent No. 5,926,811 in view of Rennison et al (hereinafter "Rennison" US Patent no. 6,154,213.

As to claim 1, Miller discloses the claimed features "organizing the data, based on relationship among the data, into a network including at least one predecessor group and a plurality of descendant groups" (col.8, lines 32-67; col.5, lines 40-col.6, line 42); "an occurrence of data located in the search term in one of said plurality of descendant groups" (col.4, lines 37-40; col.5, lines 5-45; col.6, lines 58-67); and "traversing said network from said occurrence in said

one of said plurality of descendant groups to related data in said at least one predecessor group using said relationships among the data" (col.4, lines 12-50).

However, Miller does not explicitly discloses the use of "building a context including said occurrence and said related data thereby retrieving data from the database corresponding to the search term".

On the other hand, Rennison discloses the claimed "traversing said network from said occurrence in said one of said plurality of descendant groups to related data in said at least one predecessor group using said relationships among the data" (col.2, line 62-col.3, line 18); and "building a context including said occurrence and said related data thereby retrieving data from the database corresponding to the search term" as a means for dynamically constructing representation of the context resulting from each query (col.3, lines 20-25; col.4, lines 1-12).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of data processing, at the time the present invention was made to modify the Millers system, wherein the relationship of the collection, provided thereof (see of Millers fig.15) would incorporate the use of using a context including said occurrence and said related data thereby retrieving data from the database corresponding to the search term, as suggested by Rennison (col.3, lines 20-25; col.4, lines 1-12). One of ordinary skill in the art of data processing, at the time the present invention was made would have been motivated to do such a modification because that would provide users with the ability to dynamically control the density and granularity within a topic of interest,

thereby giving the user a global understanding of where she/he is in the information structure and what her/his current location in the information structure.

As to claims 2-6, Rennison discloses the claimed "wherein said organizing the data into a network comprises organizing the data into a hierarchy" (col.9, lines 54-62); "wherein said organizing the data into a hierarchy comprises organizing the data into a hierarchy having a plurality of levels including a first level associated with said at least one predecessor group and a second level associated with at least a portion of said plurality of descendant groups, said first level being higher than said second level in said hierarchy" (col.10, lines 16-55); "wherein said traversing said network comprises upwardly traversing said hierarchy from said occurrence in said one of said plurality of descendants groups to related data in said at least one predecessor group using said relationships among the data" (col.9, lines 56-67; col.12, lines 8-35; col.18, lines 4-45); building a context including said occurrence and said related data and said second related data thereby retrieving data from the database corresponding to the search term" (col.3, lines 20-25; col.4, lines 1-12; col.12, lines 8-35); and "wherein said traversing said network comprises downwardly traversing said hierarchy from said occurrence in said one of said plurality of descendants groups to related data in said at least one predecessor group using said relationships among the data"(col.9, lines 56-67; col.12, lines 8-35; col.18, lines 4-45). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of data processing, at the time the present invention was made to combine the teachings of the cited references. One of

ordinary skill in the art of data processing, at the time the present invention was made would have been motivated to do such a combination because that would provide users with the ability to dynamically control the density and granularity within a topic of interest, thereby giving the user a global understanding of where she/he is in the information structure and what her/his current location in the information structure.

As to claims 7-11, Rennison discloses the claimed comprising downwardly and exhaustively traversing said at least one predecessor group to a plurality of second related data in said plurality of descendant groups using said relationships among the data"(col.9, lines 56-67; col.12, lines 8-35; col.18, lines 4-45); "building a context including comprises said occurrence and said related data and said plurality second related data thereby retrieving data from the database corresponding to the search term"(col.3, lines 20-25; col.4, lines 1-12; col.12, lines 8-35); "exhaustively traversing said network from said related data in said at least one predecessor group to a plurality of second related data in said plurality of descendant groups using said relationships among the data"(col.9, lines 56-67; col.12, lines 8-35; col.18, lines 4-45); "building a context including comprises said occurrence and said related data and said plurality second related data thereby retrieving data from the database corresponding to the search term"(col.3, lines 20-25; col.4, lines 1-12; col.12, lines 8-35); and "storing said context as a subset of the database" (col.4, lines 1-12, col.9, line 63-col.10, line 7).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of data processing, at the time the present invention was made to combine the teachings of the cited references. One of ordinary skill in the art of data processing, at the time the present invention was made would have been motivated to do such a combination because that would provide users with the ability to dynamically control the density and granularity within a topic of interest, thereby giving the user a global understanding of where she/he is in the information structure and what her/his current location in the information structure.

As to claims 12-16, Rennison discloses the claimed "wherein said organizing the data, based on relationships among the data into a network comprises forming a relational table indicative of relationships between instances of a first one of said plurality of descendant groups" (col.8, line 63-col.9, line 62); "wherein said forming a relational table comprises forming a many-to many transfer file indicative of relationships between said instance of said at least one predecessor group and said instances of said first one of said plurality of descendant groups" (col.4, lines 12-33, col.10, lines 16-col.11, line 33); "wherein said forming a relational table comprises forming a many-to many forward transfer file indicative of relationships between said instance of said at least one predecessor group and said instances of said first one of said plurality of descendant groups"(col.4, lines 12-33, col.10, lines 16-col.11, line 33); "wherein said forming a relational table comprises forming a many-to many reverse transfer file indicative of relationships between said instance of said at least one predecessor group and said instances of said first one of said plurality of descendant groups to said instances of said at least one predecessor group"(col.4, lines 12-33, col.10, lines 16-col.11, line 33) and "wherein said organizing the data, based on relationships among the data into a network comprises forming a relational table indicative of relationships between instances of a first one of said plurality of descendant groups and a second one of said plurality of descendant groups"(col.9, lines 56-67; col.12, lines 8-35; col.18, lines 4-45). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of data processing, at the time the present invention was made to combine the teachings of the cited references. One of ordinary skill in the art of data processing, at the time the present invention was made would have been motivated to do such a combination because that would provide users with the ability to dynamically control the density and granularity within a topic of interest, thereby giving the

user a global understanding of where she/he is in the information structure and what her/his current location in the information structure.

As to claims 17-20, Rennison discloses the claimed "wherein said forming a relational table comprises forming a many-to many transfer file indicative of relationships between said instance of said first one of said plurality of descendant groups and said instances of said second one of said plurality of descendant groups"(col.4, lines 12-33, col.9, lines 23-62; col.10, lines 16-col.11, line 33); "wherein said forming a relational table comprises forming a many-to many forward transfer file indicative of relationships between said instance of said first one of said plurality of descendant groups and said instances of said second one of said plurality of descendant groups" (col.8, lines 42-67; col.13, lines 8-42); "wherein said forming a relational table comprises forming a many-to-many reverse transfer file indicative of relationships between said instance of said first one of said plurality of descendant groups and said instances of said second one of said plurality of descendant groups"(col.8, lines 42-67; col.13, lines 8-42); and "converting the data to a numeric format in an appropriate number system" (col.34, lines 55-64).
Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of data processing, at the time the present invention was made to combine the teachings of the cited references. One of ordinary skill in the art of data processing, at the time the present invention was made would have been motivated to do such a combination because that would provide users with the ability to dynamically control the density and granularity within a topic of interest, thereby giving the user a global understanding of where she/he is in the information structure and what her/his current location in the information structure.

Claims 39-60, the limitations of claims 39-60 have been noted in the rejection of claims 1-20 above. They are, therefore, rejected under the same rationale.

Allowable Subject Matter

7. Claims 28-38 are allowable in light of the applicant's arguments and in light of the prior art made of record (see PTO 1449 and 892).

Reason for Indicating Allowable Subject Matter

8. The present application has been thoroughly reviewed. Upon extensive and exhaustive searches of various databases (see search notes in case jacket), the examiner respectfully submits that the claimed feature "traversing the hierarchy from said second occurrence to an instance of a second one of the plurality of the parents using at least one of the direct relationships or the indirect relationships; traversing the hierarchy from said instance of said second one of the first plurality of descendants to an instance of an instance of a second one of the at least some of the second plurality of descendants using the second direct relationships; building a first context corresponding to said occurrence, said instance of one of the plurality of the parents, said instance of one of the first plurality of descendants, and said instance of one of the at least some of the second plurality of descendants; and building a second context corresponding to said second occurrence, said instance of said second one of the plurality of the parents, said instance of said second one of the first plurality of descendants, and said instance of said second one of the at least some of the second plurality of descendants" in the method for retrieving information from a database organized in a hierarchy having a parent, a first plurality of descendants each

having a direct relationship to the parent, and a second plurality of descendants each having an indirect relationship to the parent through at least one of the first plurality of descendants, at plurality of descendants of claims 28 and 37 respectively, and in conjunction with all other limitations of the dependent and independent claims would not found anticipated or obvious over the prior art made of record. Therefore, all pending 28-38 are hereby allowed.

Since allowable subject matter has been indicated, applicant is encouraged to submit formal drawings in response to this Office Action. The early submission of formal drawings will permit the Office to review the drawings for acceptability and to resolve any informalities remaining therein before the application is passed to issue. This will avoid possible delays in the issue process.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance".

Conclusion

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jean M. Corrielus whose telephone number is (703) 306-3035. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday (12:00pm - 7:30 pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John E Breene can be reached on (703) 305-9790. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Jean M. Corrielus

Patent Examiner

May 15, 2004